

into a nearly 2-percent pay cut. And yet, in a spectacle that could only occur in Washington, Democrats picked the very same week to announce they want to tax, borrow, and spend yet another—listen to this—\$4 trillion in the coming weeks. Yet another budget socialist package twice as big—twice as big—as the last one.

I am sure this is just what working Americans want to hear. They are already struggling to keep up with the soaring cost of gas, groceries, diapers, housing, automobiles—you name it. And now the Democrats' big idea is to try and inflate their way out of inflation? Inflate their way out of inflation. That will be one wild ride for working Americans, middle-class families, and anybody with any savings.

For good measure, Democrats say they will probably pair this spending spree with a set of massive tax hikes, dumped right on top of our economic recovery.

Our colleagues need to take this summer and think very carefully about what they are discussing. It would be hard to imagine a proposal less suited to the conditions of our country at this point. Americans cannot afford another socialist borrowing, taxing, and spending spree that will kill jobs and raise costs for working families.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I just heard the Republican leader refer to the American Rescue Plan as a grand socialist experiment. Remember that plan? That was President Biden's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. How many Republicans voted for it? Not one. Not a House Member nor a Senate Member of the Republican Member supported it.

So what was in this socialist experiment? Well, the premiere piece was to make sure we distributed the COVID-19 vaccine to every American. Obviously, some people think that is socialism. I think it is common sense. And the more and more Americans who are immunized, the more we escape the grasp of this pandemic; 99.5 percent of those who are admitted to the hospital today with serious COVID-19 symptoms are unvaccinated.

So this was socialism? I don't think so. How about the aid we gave to small businesses to stay open or reopen? That was in the American Rescue Plan. That was Biden's plan. There was not a single Republican vote for it.

Money to help businesses to reopen is socialism? Is that what the Senator from Kentucky is suggesting? Or how about the fact that today we are going to see across the United States of America help to families, middle-income families, working families, low-income families to raise their children?

So when Donald Trump writes a check for \$2,000 to every American family, that is just fine, but when the Democrats and Biden want to give money to families raising children,

particularly those who are struggling to raise children, that is socialism? I think not. It is common sense.

If we really value families, we are going to invest in their future. And the money that is being sent starting today to these families will lift half of the children in poverty in America out of poverty for the first time. That is a dramatic achievement. It should be a bipartisan achievement. Sadly, it is a Democratic achievement because the Republicans boycotted the vote over and over.

There is one thing that the Senator from Kentucky fails to mention when he talks about the budget resolution—maybe two things are worth saying. First is this budget resolution, which we are going to bring to the floor next week, according to the leader, is going to do dramatic things across America in terms of pre-K education, 2 years of community college and the like. And in this circumstance, it is paid for. It is all paid for.

So to say it is inflationary is to suggest that it is not paid for as adding to the debt. Who pays for it? Those making over \$400,000 a year in income and corporations. That is who pays for it. And the net result of it: The biggest tax cut in the history of the United States for middle-income and working families. That is the reality.

I am going to yield the floor. I see the Senator from South Dakota has come to the floor and I know he wanted to speak. We have a few minutes left. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be able to complete my remarks before the vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

POLICE DEPARTMENTS

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, it didn't take long. Just a year since "defund the police" became a rallying cry and cities started cutting money from police budgets, crime is surging.

At the beginning of June, the New York Times reported:

Homicide rates in large cities were up more than 30 percent on average last year, and up another 24 percent for the beginning of this year.

Homicides are up in New York City, Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles, Columbus; and the list goes on. And it isn't only homicide rates that have risen. During the first 4 months of the year, Los Angeles saw a 73-percent increase in shootings.

As of the end of May, Portland, OR, which has been ravaged by violent riots over the past year, was on track to exceed 1,000 shootings for this year, as compared to 389 in 2019.

A Washington Examiner piece from June reported:

Through the first 14 weeks of this year, New York City saw an 81 percent increase in shootings, the highest number of shootings during the same time period since 2002. Robberies, grand larcenies, felony assaults, and

shootings have all increased in April and May compared to last year.

San Francisco has seen a surge in car break-ins, among other crimes, with the San Francisco Chronicle reporting in June that "last month, the Police Department's Central Station saw a 753 percent increase in auto burglaries compared to the previous May."

In Oakland, CA, carjackings are up almost 88 percent, shootings are up 70 percent, and homicides are up 90 percent.

Unfortunately, I could go on all day. The crime surge is real, and it is frightening. I quoted a lot of statistics and percentages, but there are real people behind every one of those crimes—people whose lives have been cut short or ravaged by violence, people whose sense of safety has been destroyed.

It turns out that—surprise—defunding the police is a terrible idea. It is no coincidence at all that cities that have slashed their police budgets have seen huge increases in violence. Some of them are even recognizing the mistake they made and seeking to restore the funding that they cut. A Fox Business piece reports:

Cities like New York City, Oakland, Baltimore, Minneapolis, and Los Angeles are planning to reinstate tens of millions for the construction of new police precincts, increase police department budgets, among other plans to bankroll more efforts to confront the uptick in crime.

Unfortunately, the problem won't necessarily be fixed that easily because "defund the police" rhetoric has not just resulted in smaller police budgets; it has also resulted in police demoralization and left departments worried about deploying officers to do their jobs. It has resulted in a wave of police retirements and resignations.

The New York Times reports:

Thousands of police officers nationwide have headed for the exits in the past year. A survey of almost 200 police departments indicated that retirements were up 45 percent and resignations rose by 18 percent in the year from April 2020 to April 2021 when compared with the previous 12 months.

That is from the New York Times.

The city of Asheville, NC, has lost one-third of its police force—one-third, Mr. President. It is not surprising. It turns out that when you spend months vilifying police officers and demonizing them for doing their jobs, some of them no longer want to stay. This is perhaps the worst consequence of the "defund the police" movement.

Cutting police budgets is not a good idea, but resources and equipment can be built back up again, sometimes fairly quickly. It is a lot harder to replace good seasoned officers with years of experience protecting public safety. While it would be hard to replace them at any time, it is particularly hard today because it is difficult to imagine why anyone would want to become a police officer right now. Why would good men and women sign up for a job where they are regularly characterized as the worst kind of criminals? Why would they sign up knowing they may

be prevented from or punished for doing the job we ask them to do?

Violence against police officers—always a danger—is up. The sickening scene of protesters shouting “death to police” outside a hospital where two ambushed law enforcement officers were fighting for their lives has to be emblazoned on the minds of police officers nationwide. Again I ask, why would anyone want to join the police under these conditions?

The “defund the police” movement is not only costing us many good officers today, it has depleted the pool of good officers for the future, and that is a travesty.

The unfortunate truth is, the Democrats bear a substantial amount of responsibility for the situation we find ourselves in because this is a party that either actively contributed to the “defund the police” rhetoric or implicitly endorsed it by largely staying silent, not to mention the less-than-censorious attitude the Democrats frequently displayed when it came to the violence and property destruction of last summer and the past year.

California Representative MAXINE WATERS said protesters in Minneapolis this April should “get more confrontational” should the verdict in the Chauvin trial not go their way.

Far-left Members of the House of Representatives spent the past year making statements like these:

Policing in our country is inherently and intentionally racist.

No more policing, incarceration, and militarization.

Now, more mainstream Democrats have become wise to the fact that their party’s association with the “defund the police” movement may threaten their electoral chances next year. As polling demonstrated, Americans are squarely against the idea of defunding the police. So the President and other Democratic leaders all of a sudden announced their concern about surging crime, but they are still trying to have their cake and eat it, too, because missing from their messaging is any real condemnation of “defund the police” rhetoric and the terrible toll it has taken on our cities and police departments.

In fact, President Biden, who is currently trying to reinvent himself as tough on crime, filled key roles in the Department of Justice with individuals who have gone on record with their support for defunding the police. President Biden’s Secretary of Labor actually cut police funding while serving as Boston’s mayor, and his Secretary of Housing and Urban Development has suggested that we should consider decreasing police budgets.

Democrats’ actual crime-fighting plans are long on punishing gun dealers and gun manufacturers and short on actually going after criminals. The President’s nominee to head the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives seems more interested in targeting law-abiding gun owners than in dealing with the surge in gun crime.

I have one last point to make about the “defund the police” movement, and that is its fundamental injustice. Are there bad police officers out there? Of course there are. There are bad teachers out there, too, and bad social workers and bad small businessmen. But just as it would be outrageous to demonize all teachers because of a few bad apples in their profession, it is outrageous to demonize the hundreds of thousands of dedicated men and women defending public safety in this country because of a handful of bad officers.

We owe our men and women in law enforcement a great debt—a debt we can’t even fully comprehend. These men and women go out and risk their lives every day of the week, every month of the year, to keep us safe. But they don’t just risk their lives; they also bear a heavy physical and emotional burden. Most of us go about our daily lives without having to confront much evil because our law enforcement officers go out every day to confront it for us. They confront violence so that we don’t have to, and they pay a price. It is tough to have to see evil on a daily basis, to spend years rescuing children who are in trouble or supporting victims of violence or bringing rapists to justice, but it is a price most of them are glad to pay. They signed up to protect the innocent, to keep the public safe and evil at bay, and they are proud to do it. We owe them and their families our profound gratitude.

It is abhorrent that anti-police rhetoric has become such an accepted part of our national conversation and has been winked at or endorsed by so many Democratic leaders. We owe our police officers much better.

I hope the belated realization among some that police officers are essential to keeping our communities safe will spell the end of the “defund the police” movement. It is time to focus on protecting public safety and honoring men and women who spend every day working to promote it.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON LIANG NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Liang nomination?

Mr. DURBIN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

The result was announced—yeas 72, nays 27, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 264 Ex.]

YEAS—72

| | | |
|------------|--------|----------|
| Baldwin | Blunt | Burr |
| Bennet | Booker | Cantwell |
| Blumenthal | Brown | Capito |

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|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Cardin | Kaine | Rosen |
| Carper | Kelly | Rounds |
| Casey | King | Sanders |
| Collins | Klobuchar | Schatz |
| Coons | Leahy | Schumer |
| Cornyn | Lujan | Scott (SC) |
| Cortez Masto | Manchin | Shaheen |
| Crapo | Markey | Sinema |
| Daines | McConnell | Smith |
| Duckworth | Merkley | Stabenow |
| Durbin | Moran | Tester |
| Feinstein | Murkowski | Thune |
| Fischer | Murphy | Toomey |
| Gillibrand | Murray | Van Hollen |
| Grassley | Ossoff | Warner |
| Hassan | Padilla | Warnock |
| Heinrich | Peters | Warren |
| Hickenlooper | Portman | Whitehouse |
| Hirono | Reed | Wicker |
| Hyde-Smith | Risch | Wyden |
| Johnson | Romney | Young |

NAYS—27

| | | |
|-----------|----------|------------|
| Barrasso | Hagerty | Menendez |
| Blackburn | Hawley | Paul |
| Boozman | Hoeben | Rubio |
| Braun | Inhofe | Sasse |
| Cassidy | Kennedy | Scott (FL) |
| Cotton | Lankford | Shelby |
| Cramer | Lee | Sullivan |
| Cruz | Lummis | Tillis |
| Ernst | Marshall | Tuberville |

NOT VOTING—1

Graham

The nomination was confirmed.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCHATZ). The clerk will report the next nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Donald Michael Remy, of Louisiana, to be Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Remy nomination?

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

The result was announced—yeas 91, nays 8, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 265 Ex.]

YEAS—91

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|--------------|--------------|------------|
| Baldwin | Duckworth | Marshall |
| Barrasso | Durbin | McConnell |
| Bennet | Feinstein | Menendez |
| Blumenthal | Fischer | Merkley |
| Blunt | Gillibrand | Moran |
| Booker | Grassley | Murkowski |
| Boozman | Hassan | Murphy |
| Braun | Heinrich | Murray |
| Brown | Hickenlooper | Ossoff |
| Burr | Hirono | Padilla |
| Cantwell | Hoeben | Paul |
| Capito | Hyde-Smith | Peters |
| Cardin | Inhofe | Portman |
| Carper | Johnson | Reed |
| Casey | Kaine | Risch |
| Cassidy | Kelly | Romney |
| Collins | Kennedy | Rosen |
| Coons | King | Rounds |
| Cornyn | Klobuchar | Rubio |
| Cortez Masto | Leahy | Sanders |
| Cotton | Lee | Sasse |
| Cramer | Lujan | Schatz |
| Crapo | Lummis | Schumer |
| Cruz | Manchin | Scott (SC) |
| Daines | Markey | Shaheen |